

INVITATION TO THE SEPTUAGINT

SECOND EDITION

Karen H. Jobes *and* Moisés Silva

B
Baker Academic
a division of Baker Publishing Group
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*
Baker Academic, a division of Baker Publishing Group, © 2000, 2015. Used by permission.

(Unpublished manuscript—copyright protected Baker Publishing Group)

© 2000, 2015 by Karen H. Jobs and Moisés Silva

Published by Baker Academic
a division of Baker Publishing Group
P.O. Box 6287, Grand Rapids, MI 49516-6287
www.bakeracademic.com

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—for example, electronic, photocopy, recording—without the prior written permission of the publisher. The only exception is brief quotations in printed reviews.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Jobs, Karen H.

Invitation to the Septuagint / Karen H. Jobs and Moisés Silva.—Second Edition.
pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN 978-0-8010-3649-1 (pbk.)

1. Bible. Old Testament. Greek—Versions—Septuagint. I. Silva, Moisés. II. Title.

BS744.J63 2015

221.4809—dc23

2015020255

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are the authors' translation.

Scripture quotations labeled NIV are from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com

Scripture quotations labeled NRSV are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

15 16 17 18 19 20 21 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Karen H. Jobs and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*
Baker Academic, a division of Baker Publishing Group, © 2000, 2015. Used by permission.

(Unpublished manuscript—copyright protected Baker Publishing Group)

Contents

List of Illustrations	ix
Preface to the Second Edition	xi
Preface to the First Edition	xiii
Acknowledgments for the First Edition	xvi
Abbreviations	xviii
Map	xxii
Time Line	xxiii

Introduction: *Why Study the Septuagint?* 1

Part 1: The History of the Septuagint

1. The Origin of the Septuagint and Other Greek Versions 13
2. The Transmission of the Septuagint 34
3. The Septuagint in Modern Times 63
4. The Septuagint as a Translation 84

Part 2: The Septuagint in Biblical Studies

5. The Language of the Septuagint 113
6. Establishing the Text of the Septuagint 128
7. Using the Septuagint for the Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible 156
8. The Judean Desert Discoveries and Septuagint Studies 181

9. The Septuagint and the New Testament 200
10. Interpreting the Septuagint 228

Part 3: The Current State of Septuagint Studies

11. Our Predecessors: *Septuagint Scholars of a Previous Generation* 265
12. Current Studies in Language and Translation 289
13. Reconstructing the History of the Text 308
14. Theological Development in the Hellenistic Age 326

Appendixes

- A. Major Organizations and Research Projects 351
- B. Reference Works 365
- C. Glossary 369
- D. Differences in Versification between English Versions and the Septuagint 376
- E. Symbols and Abbreviations of the Göttingen Critical Apparatus 381

Indexes

- Index of Hebrew/Aramaic Words and Phrases 385
- Index of Greek Words and Phrases 387
- Index of Scripture References 389
- Index of Modern Scholars 392
- Index of Subjects 398

Illustrations

- I.1. Map of the Hellenistic World xxii
- I.2. Time Line of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods xxiii
- 2.1. Traditional Understanding of the Relationship between the Septuagint and the Later Greek Versions 35
- 2.2. Alternative Understanding of the Relationship between the Septuagint and the Later Greek Versions 39
- 2.3. Textual History of the Greek Versions 49
- 2.4. Codex Vaticanus 53
- 2.5. Codex Sinaiticus 54
- 2.6. Codex Alexandrinus 55
- 2.7. Codex Marchalianus 57
- 2.8. Manuscript Chigi (Daniel) 58
- 2.9. Manuscript Chigi (Ezekiel) 59
- 3.1. Holmes-Parsons Septuagint 67
- 3.2. Order of Books in the Hebrew Bible, the Greek Septuagint, and the English (Protestant) Bible 76
- 5.1. 1 Reigns (1 Samuel) 3:19–4:2 120
- 6.1. Larger Cambridge Septuagint 148
- 6.2. Rahlfs’s Septuagint 150
- 6.3. Göttingen Isaiah 152
- 6.4. Göttingen Genesis 154

-
- 7.1. 3 Reigns (1 Kings) 2:1–5 176
 - 8.1. Qumran Scroll Fragments 4QJer^{b,d,e} 189
 - 10.1. Esther 5:1–2 and D:1–16 Compared 254
 - 11.1. Paul A. de Lagarde 269
 - 11.2. Alfred Rahlfs 272
 - 11.3. Henry Barclay Swete 274
 - 11.4. Henry St. John Thackeray 277
 - 11.5. Max Leopold Margolis 279
 - 11.6. John W. Wevers 287

Preface to the Second Edition

The authors and publisher are gratified by the warm reception given to the first edition of *Invitation to the Septuagint*. Since its publication, however, research in the field of Septuagint and cognate studies has developed at an increasingly faster pace. Numerous contributions—including some of major significance—have appeared in monographs, works of reference, journal articles, and anthologies. In addition, we have received many valuable suggestions from reviewers, colleagues, and students.

Any attempt to give a full account of developments during the past fifteen years would make the book unwieldy and diminish its value as an introductory text. We therefore have needed to be selective in the addition of new material. In spite of that, every chapter has grown longer. Often the additions consist of bibliographic references in the footnotes, but the body of the text itself has been expanded at many points, either to provide fuller discussion of topics treated in the previous edition or to cover new issues (e.g., the current debates on the interlinear paradigm and on the hermeneutics of translation). Chapter 11 now includes biographic profiles of several additional scholars (J. Ziegler, I. Soisalon-Soininen, D. Barthélemy, and J. W. Wevers). And a new appendix lists an English translation of the Göttingen sigla and abbreviations. The glossary too has been expanded.

Revisions include the correction of some inaccuracies and numerous minor changes that we hope will make the text more serviceable. Many of these changes might not have occurred to us had it not been for those readers who graciously took the time to bring them to our attention; we are truly grateful for their collaboration.

In addition, we have attempted to clarify statements that were either ambiguous or susceptible to misunderstanding. In particular, some readers have

inferred that we do not consider the Septuagint to be valuable for the establishment of the Hebrew text.¹ We believe that this criticism was unjustified. It is true that we urge caution in this area (to avoid the frequently haphazard use of the Septuagint as an easy solution to text-critical problems), but at several crucial points we handle the subject in positive terms.² Nevertheless, we welcome the opportunity in this new edition to make our position clearer through various changes and additions in chapter 7.

Thanks must go to the Wheaton College and Graduate School teaching assistants who helped in various ways during the revision process, especially Jeremy Otten (2012–13), who helped to gather bibliography, and Jeremiah Coogan (2013–14), who assisted in expanding chapters 6 and 11 and the appendixes.

To the students who have used or will use this book to further their knowledge, we dedicate this work.

Karen H. Jobs
Wheaton, Illinois

Moisés Silva
Litchfield, Michigan

1. Such was the judgment of the late James Barr in his extensive review of our book in *RBL* (Oct. 2002; published online at http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/1341_3027.pdf), and other writers have depended on his evaluation. Our response was published in *BIOSCS* 35 (2002): 43–46 and is also included at the end of Barr’s online review.

2. To mention only the most obvious example: in our *primary* treatment of this topic, where we discuss Deut. 31:1 (see chap. 7, “The Septuagint Compared to the Masoretic Text,” below), we conclude that the Septuagint reading, rather than that of the Masoretic Text, is original. Note also that we commend Emanuel Tov’s book *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* as a “sober and reliable guide” (see chap. 7, “To Continue Your Study,” below). Indeed, aside from a couple of issues (such as his low regard for the classic “rules” of internal evidence), we find ourselves in almost complete agreement with Tov’s judicious principles and methods.

Preface to the First Edition

The inspiration for a book like this was born during my doctoral studies at Westminster Theological Seminary in a course entitled “The Greek Old Testament,” taught by Moisés Silva. I had previously heard Professor Silva comment that this course was the hardest one offered at the seminary. Being a woman who enjoys a reasonable challenge and having become enamored with Biblical Greek, I registered for the course with enthusiasm.

Very quickly I began to appreciate both the technical and conceptual complexities of Septuagint studies. So many of my naive assumptions about texts, manuscripts, and the Scriptures I hold dear were quickly shattered. I began to see a more profound, mysterious, and wonderful picture that captured my scholarly imagination. I’ve been hooked on Septuagint studies ever since.

Professor Silva was right; it was a difficult course. But one of the difficulties for me as a student completely new to the subject was that everything I read about the Septuagint seemed to presume a great deal of prior knowledge. I could find nothing that provided an introduction to the scholarly discussions that had been going on for decades. I needed a concise primer that would define the jargon, delineate the most fundamental and elementary concepts, and trace out the overarching issues of what Septuagint studies was all about. As I worked through the course under Professor Silva’s able guidance, I began to make notes of things I wish someone had written in clear, easy language. Although I was unaware of it at the time, the outline for this book had begun to take shape.

This book is intended to be a relatively brief and inviting introduction for the student who has no prior knowledge of the Septuagint. It aims to introduce both the history and current state of the scholarly discussion by presenting the terminology, foundational concepts, and major issues in Septuagint studies.

Nevertheless, those interested in pursuing the technical use of the Septuagint in textual criticism and biblical studies will also find resources here to further their understanding. If successful, this book will serve as a bridge to the more sophisticated literature produced by scholars working in the field. We trust that our book not only honors the work done by previous generations of Septuagint scholars and accurately presents the work now being done by our colleagues in the field but will also inspire future generations to take up this fascinating field of research.

Karen H. Jobes
Santa Barbara, California

In my student days at Westminster Theological Seminary, unlike Professor Jobes, I did not even have the option of taking a class in Septuagint studies. I was, however, able to sign up for an independent reading course on the subject as part of my Th.M. program; and later the text of the Septuagint became a major focus of attention in my doctoral research at the University of Manchester. In my experience, learning the basic facts related to the Septuagint proved painless, but I soon realized how superficial, and therefore dangerous, that knowledge was. Moving to the next level—that is, being able to handle the Greek text responsibly and to understand specialized articles—required considerable effort, especially without the benefit of structured guidance.

When I began to offer a course on the Greek Old Testament, my aim was to help students profit from my mistakes. While there is no such thing as “Septuagint without tears” (indeed, without the affliction of trial and error, one seldom learns anything), pedagogical direction can prevent much wasted time and unnecessary frustration. This book seeks to perform that service. We have made a special effort to write part 1 in a simple and user-friendly fashion, but without minimizing the problems and ambiguities inherent in the subject. The qualifications and nuances in those first chapters are essential if one is to avoid building a shaky foundation.

It is in part 2, however, that we seek to guide the reader through the thicket of the Septuagintal forest. The chapters in this section are intended for students who already have some knowledge of the biblical languages and who wish to attain an intermediate level of proficiency in the use of the Greek Bible. With the additional help of part 3, which reviews the state of scholarship on selected topics, a few readers may even decide that advanced study of the Septuagint is worth pursuing.

The great challenge in teaching a course (or writing a book) on a complex subject is that explaining any one detail seems to assume some understanding of many other items not yet covered. This problem is particularly acute in

the field of Septuagint studies. Some repetition is therefore unavoidable, but in dealing with individual topics we have also relied heavily on the use of cross-references to both prior and subsequent discussions within the book. In the end, however, a second reading of the volume may be necessary to tie loose ends.

I must add that this book would never have been written without the productive and persevering efforts of Professor Jobes, on whom fell the lion's share of the work in its initial stages. Throughout the project, however, we have been in frequent consultation, reading and critiquing each other's work, and discussing every aspect of the book before it took its final form. As a result, this book represents a collaborative effort in the fullest sense of the term. It is our wish that others will find as much delight in reading these pages as we have found in writing them.

Moisés Silva
Ipswich, Massachusetts

Acknowledgments for the First Edition

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the significant help we have received throughout the course of this project. We are especially grateful to David Aiken for proposing the idea of such a book in the first place, for promoting the work in many ways, and for agreeing to copyedit the typescript. His personal and scholarly interest in Septuagint studies has much to do with the successful completion of the book.

Several specialists have generously given of their time to assist us. Leonard J. Greenspoon, Emanuel Tov, Robert A. Kraft, and Martin G. Abegg read portions of the typescript at an early stage and provided valuable criticisms. Other colleagues, including Natalio Fernández Marcos, Peter W. Flint, Peter J. Gentry, Robert H. Gundry, Galen Marquis, Bruce M. Metzger, Takamitsu Muraoka, Bradley Nassif, Gerard Norton, Albert Pietersma, Eugene C. Ulrich, and John W. Wevers, were kind enough to respond to inquiries or otherwise support our research.

To the staff of the Septuaginta-Unternehmen in Göttingen we extend our sincere thanks. During a visit to its facilities, the authors were able to discuss some important questions and to gather information unavailable anywhere else. We are particularly indebted to its director, Anneli Aejmelaeus, for the time that she unselfishly spent with us, and to Udo Quast, whose unique knowledge of Septuagint manuscripts and of the work of the institute proved invaluable.

We also profited greatly from a brief visit to the Centre for Septuagint Studies and Textual Criticism (Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, Belgium). Our thanks to Erik Eynikel and Katrin Hauspie for their assistance during that time and to its director, Johan Lust.

The authors also thank the staff of the Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center at Claremont, California, for their assistance in selecting and acquiring the photographs of manuscripts that appear in this volume.

David L. Palmer, Byington scholar at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, read a near-final draft of the typescript with great care, identifying some remaining problems and offering numerous suggestions for improvement.

Bradford Zinnecker, also a Byington scholar at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, prepared an initial draft of appendix D that greatly facilitated our work.

Finally, the authors express their thanks to Westmont College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary for the support they have received in the production of this book.

Abbreviations

General and Bibliographic

AASF	Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae
AB	Anchor Bible
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
ALGHJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
app(s).	appendix(es)
ARG	<i>Archiv für Religionsgeschichte</i>
AT	Alpha-Text of Greek Esther
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BDF	Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BHQ	<i>Biblia Hebraica Quinta</i> . Edited by Adrian Schenker et al. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004–.
BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> . Edited by Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983.
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BIOSCS	<i>Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BN	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
BSCS	Brill Septuagint Commentary Series
BSNA	Biblical Scholarship in North America
BTS	Biblical Tools and Studies
BZ	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>

BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ca.	<i>circa</i> , about
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue biblique
CATSS	Computer Assisted Tools for Septuagint Studies
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
chap(s).	chapter(s)
Cod.	Codex
ConBOT	Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series
DBSup	<i>Dictionnaire de la Bible: Supplément</i> . Edited by Louis Pirot and André Robert. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1928–.
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
Eng.	English
enl.	enlarged
esp.	especially
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HS	<i>Hebrew Studies</i>
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IOSCS	International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JBS	Jerusalem Biblical Studies
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JNSL	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
JNSLSup	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages Supplement
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JQRSup	Jewish Quarterly Review Supplement
JS	<i>Journal for Semitics</i>
JSCS	<i>Journal of Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JSSM	Journal of Semitic Studies Monograph
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KJV	King James Version
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
lit.	literally
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	Henry G. Liddell, Robert Scott, and Henry S. Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
LXX	Septuagint
MS(S)	manuscript(s)
MSU	Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens
MT	Masoretic Text

NETS	<i>A New English Translation of the Septuagint</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
n.s.	new series
NT	New Testament
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OG	Old Greek
OL	Old Latin
OT	Old Testament
OTS	Old Testament Studies
<i>OtSt</i>	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PL	Patrologia Latina
pl(s).	plate(s)
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RBL	Review of Biblical Literature
repr.	reprint
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
SBEC	Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLCS	Society of Biblical Literature Commentary on the Septuagint
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SOTSMS	Society for Old Testament Studies Monograph Series
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
s.v.	<i>sub verbo</i> , under the word
<i>TJ</i>	<i>Trinity Journal</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TSMEMJ	Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism
UPATS	University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Gen.	Genesis	Num.	Numbers	Judg.	Judges
Exod.	Exodus	Deut.	Deuteronomy	Ruth	Ruth
Lev.	Leviticus	Josh.	Joshua	1–2 Sam.	1–2 Samuel

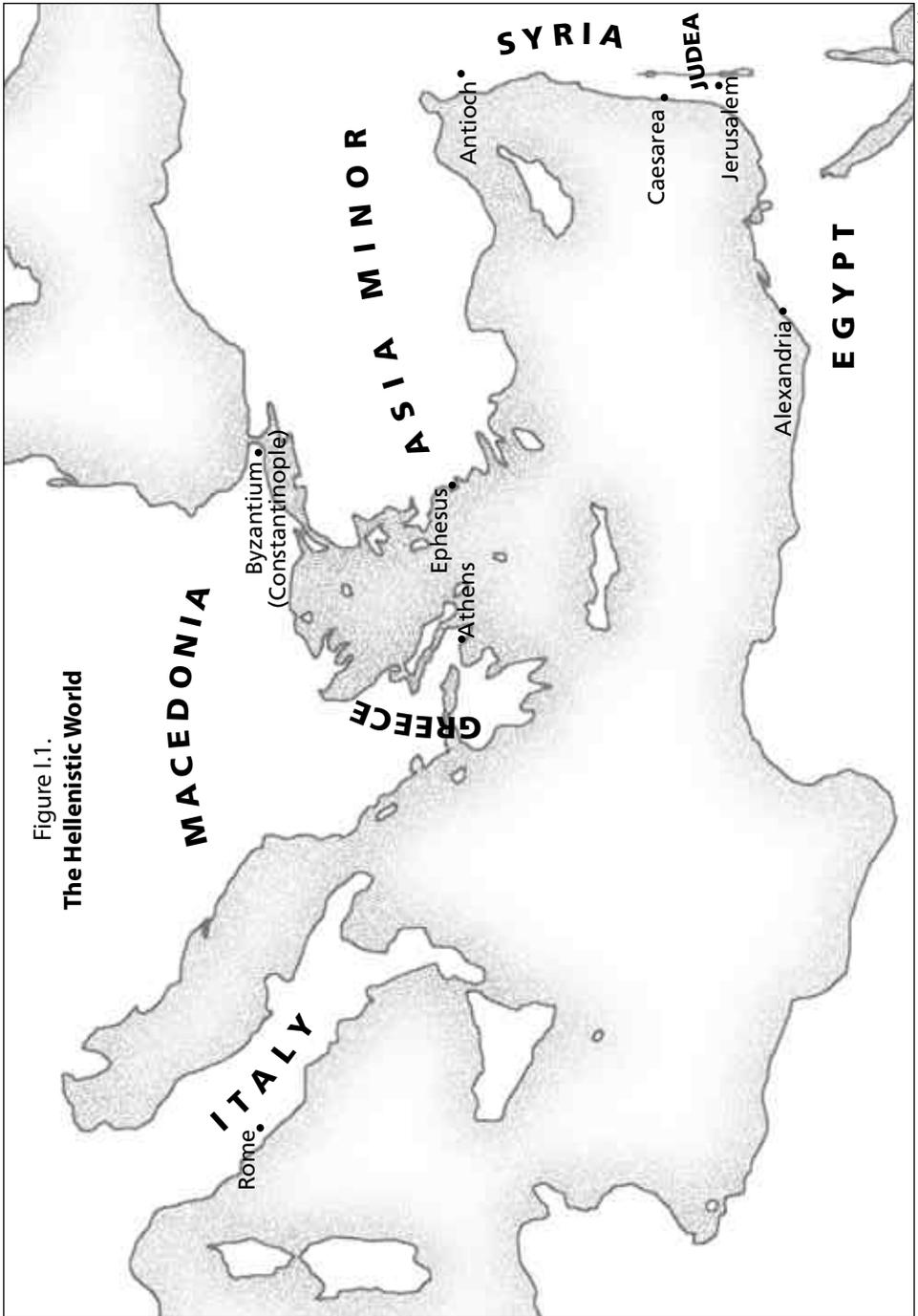
1–2 Kings	1–2 Kings	Song	Song of Songs	Obad.	Obadiah
1–2 Chron.	1–2 Chronicles	Isa.	Isaiah	Jon.	Jonah
Ezra	Ezra	Jer.	Jeremiah	Mic.	Micah
Neh.	Nehemiah	Lam.	Lamentations	Nah.	Nahum
Esther	Esther	Ezek.	Ezekiel	Hab.	Habakkuk
Job	Job	Dan.	Daniel	Zeph.	Zephaniah
Ps(s).	Psalms	Hosea	Hosea	Hag.	Haggai
Prov.	Proverbs	Joel	Joel	Zech.	Zechariah
Eccles.	Ecclesiastes	Amos	Amos	Mal.	Malachi

Old Testament Apocrypha

Add. Dan.	Additions to Daniel	Pr. Azar.	Prayer of Azariah
Add. Esth.	Additions to Esther	Pr. Man.	Prayer of Manasseh
Bar.	Baruch	Ps. 151	Psalm 151
Bel	Bel and the Dragon	Sir. (Eccclus.)	Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)
1–2 Esd.	1–2 Esdras	Sg. Three	Song of the Three Jews
Jdt.	Judith	Sus.	Susanna
Let. Jer.	Letter of Jeremiah	Tob.	Tobit
1–4 Macc.	1–4 Maccabees	Wis.	Wisdom (of Solomon)

New Testament

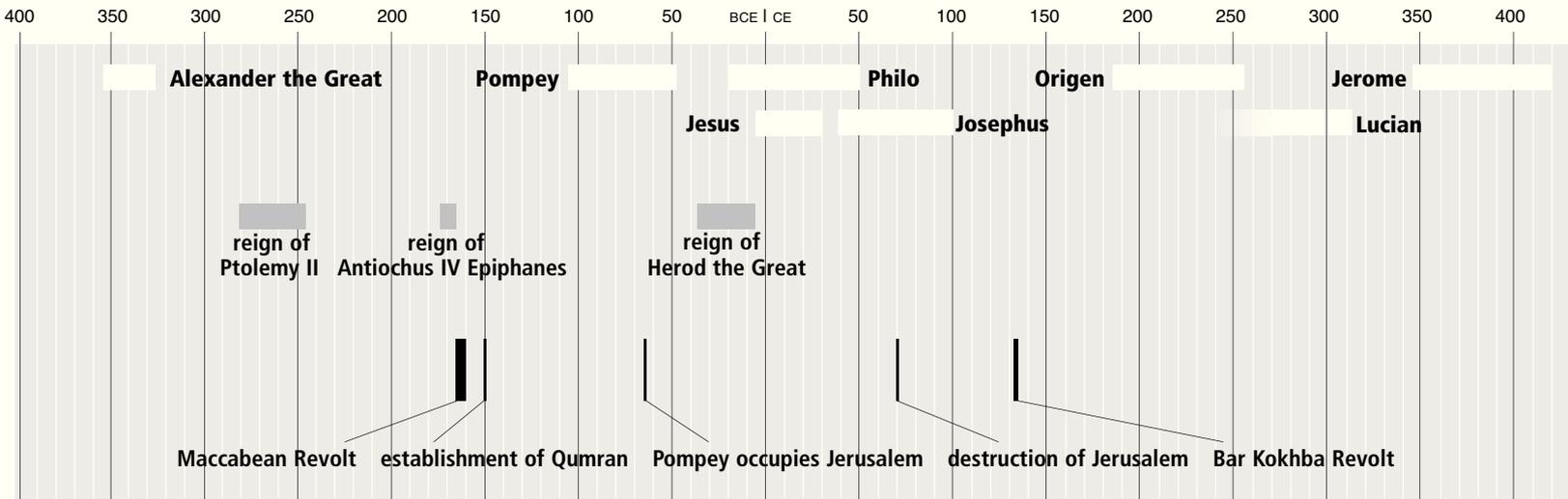
Matt.	Matthew	1–2 Thess.	1–2 Thessalonians
Mark	Mark	1–2 Tim.	1–2 Timothy
Luke	Luke	Titus	Titus
John	John	Philem.	Philemon
Acts	Acts	Heb.	Hebrews
Rom.	Romans	James	James
1–2 Cor.	1–2 Corinthians	1–2 Pet.	1–2 Peter
Gal.	Galatians	1–3 John	1–3 John
Eph.	Ephesians	Jude	Jude
Phil.	Philippians	Rev.	Revelation
Col.	Colossians		



Dan Malda

Figure 1.1.
The Hellenistic World

Figure I.2.
Time Line of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods



Dan Malda

Introduction

Why Study the Septuagint?

The SEPTUAGINT—commonly abbreviated LXX—is a fascinating treasure from the ancient past.¹ Whether you are Christian or Jewish or neither,² whether you are only generally interested in religious studies or are an aspiring biblical scholar, it is worth your while to become acquainted with it. Because the Septuagint was the first translation made of the Hebrew Bible (and possibly of any literary work of comparable size) into another language, it marks a milestone in human culture. Knowledge of the ancient world is incomplete without understanding the significance of the Septuagint and the history that brought it into existence. In this book, we invite you to learn about the place of this translation in history, to appreciate its value for modern scholarship, and to come away with some of our enthusiasm for it. The present chapter is intended as an overview of the field, with a brief description of issues that will be treated later in greater detail.

1. The “proper” way to pronounce *Septuagint* is the subject of lighthearted debate among specialists. English dictionaries typically suggest the pronunciation *SEP-too-a-jint* or *sep-TOO-a-jint* or the like, but many scholars in the discipline treat it as a three-syllable word, *SEP-twa-jint*. In Europe, one often hears the last syllable pronounced with a hard g, after the pattern of Latin *Septuaginta*.

Terms included in the glossary are set in small caps the first time they appear in the text.

2. The authors are Christian but recognize and value the Jewish heritage of the Bible and its translations. Accordingly, the term *Hebrew Bible* or *Hebrew Scriptures* will be used mainly when the text is discussed in the context of Judaism, and *Old Testament* (OT) when in the context of the church.

The Septuagint and the Hebrew Bible

The Bible contains ancient writings that have been read continuously from the time of its authors until our own. The first and oldest part of the Bible was written originally in Hebrew (with some small portions in Aramaic: Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26; Dan. 2:4–7:28; Jer. 10:11; and two words in Gen. 31:47). The abiding importance of these sacred writings—first to the Jews and later to the Christians—demanded that throughout history they be translated into the languages of the peoples who received them as Scripture.

After the Near East was conquered by Alexander the Great (ca. 333 BCE), the Jewish people came under the influence of Hellenistic culture. Their religious values and ancient ways collided with Greek practices, philosophies, and language. Just as today most Jews live outside of Israel, so it was during the Hellenistic period. Because as a rule the Jews of the DIASPORA (Dispersion) scattered throughout the Mediterranean no longer spoke Hebrew, they needed to translate their sacred writings into Greek, which had become the *lingua franca* of the Hellenistic world. Thus the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, now known as the Septuagint, became Scripture to the Greek-speaking Jewish communities in the Diaspora. Together with the Greek NT, it would become the Bible of most Christians during the first centuries of the church. The Greek version remains even today the canonical text for the Orthodox Christian tradition, which traces its heritage to the earliest Greek-speaking Christians.

Because of the Greek Bible’s widespread importance, numerous copies of it were produced by scribes in many places throughout the centuries. More manuscripts of the Greek OT survive than of any other ancient Greek text except the NT. According to one authoritative source, “At present, up to 2000 Greek manuscripts of the Septuagint are known: they cover a period of time that stretches from the 2nd century BCE to the 16th century CE and are now scattered all over the globe.”³ For scholars interested in the complexities of textual criticism and the tendencies of scribes, the manuscripts of the Greek versions provide an enormous amount of material for study.

The Septuagint is written in KOINE, that is, the common Greek of the Hellenistic age, a form of the language that had developed from the Classical Greek of fifth-century Athens. For students of the Greek language during the Hellenistic period, the Septuagint is a major source of information. Moreover, because it is a translation of a Hebrew text into Greek, it provides a

3. This estimate comes from the Septuaginta-Unternehmen in Göttingen: <http://adw-goe.de/en/research/research-projects-within-the-academies-programme/septuaginta-unternehmen/> (accessed September 2, 2015). As with ancient works generally, many of the manuscripts are fragmentary. See below, chap. 2, “Greek Manuscripts,” for further detail.

unique opportunity for those interested in comparing translation Greek to composition Greek.

The Greek version has great value also for the study of the Hebrew text. The issues surrounding this use of the version are complex, but the fact remains that the Septuagint was translated from some Hebrew text that was not identical to the Hebrew text we use today. That original Greek translation, which was produced earlier than surviving copies of the Hebrew Bible, is an indirect witness to its *VORLAGE*, that is, the Hebrew parent text from which it was translated. In theory, the Septuagint should allow scholars to reconstruct that earlier Hebrew text, though in practice this activity is fraught with difficulties.

Already in the first chapter of the Bible we come across some interesting examples where the Greek differs from the extant Hebrew. Compare Gen. 1:6–7 in the two forms (translated literally into English):

Hebrew	Greek
6 And God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it be separating between waters to waters.”	And God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the water, and let it be separating between water and water.” And it was so.
7 And God made the firmament and separated between the waters that [were] under the firmament and between the waters that [were] above the firmament. And it was so.	And God made the firmament, and God separated between the water that was under the firmament and between the water above the firmament.

A few minor differences may be observed, such as the repetition of “God” in the Greek version of verse 7. Note especially, however, that the Greek has the words “and it was so” in verse 6 rather than in verse 7. Does that mean, as some scholars argue, that the Hebrew manuscript used by the Greek translator also had the phrase in verse 6? Or is there some other way to account for the difference?

One of the reasons scholars cannot be certain that the Greek exactly represents its Hebrew *Vorlage* is that translation between any two languages always involves a degree of interpretation. The translators who produced the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible were also interpreters who came to the text with the theological and political prejudices of their time and thus had to deal with

hermeneutical issues similar to those we face today. Their translations were no doubt influenced, whether deliberately or subconsciously, by what they believed the Hebrew meant in light of their contemporary situation, which may not have been what the author of the Hebrew text intended. Clearly, this is bad news to the textual critic, who wants to use the Greek version to reconstruct its Hebrew parent text. It is possible that the Greek translator deleted the phrase “and it was so” from Gen. 1:7, perhaps because it sounded out of place, and inserted it in 1:6, where it seemed more appropriate immediately following God’s command (similarly, the Greek text includes this phrase after the command in Gen. 1:20, where it is absent in extant Hebrew texts).

On the other hand, precisely because the Septuagint reflects the theological, social, and political interests of its translators, it provides valuable information about how the Hebrew Bible was understood and interpreted at the time the translators were working. In the Greek we find passages that are given a particular political or religious spin. This feature is especially clear in the book of Isaiah. For example, the Hebrew text of Isa. 65:11 reproaches those who, forsaking the Lord, “set tables for Gad [a god of fortune] and fill cups of mixed wine for Meni [a god of fate].” The names of these SEMITIC gods were probably not familiar to Alexandrian Jews, and so the translator replaced these names with the Greek words for “demon” and “fate,” both of which could be understood as names for deities.⁴ With this technique, the translator managed not only to clarify the meaning of the text but also to contextualize it.

One must also remember that the Septuagint was produced in the wake of Alexander’s conquest and death, when Palestine was coveted by the Ptolemies to the south in Egypt and the Seleucids to the north in Syria. Because Palestine was caught in the middle, political allegiances among the Jews were often divided. Moreover, great internal turmoil resulted as Jews in favor of Hellenization clashed with those who opposed it. Just as people today use the Bible to support their agendas, so also were the sacred writings appealed to for authority at that time. And just as a given verse today can be interpreted to support the claims of opposing parties, so also were specific sacred texts understood differently by different communities. This conflict may be seen, for instance, in the Essenes’ understanding of Scripture when compared with that of the Pharisees. To what extent such interpretations can be identified

4. See Isaac L. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah: A Discussion of Its Problems* (Leiden: Brill, 1948), 99. He argues that the Greek words should be taken as a reference to Agathos Daimon and Tyche, deities in the Hellenistic cult. This work, along with two other studies, has been reprinted as *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies*, ed. Robert Hanhart and Hermann Spieckermann, FAT 40 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), with different pagination (see 264).

in the Greek translation of the Bible is a subject of debate, but it would be strange indeed if the political loyalties and religious convictions of the translators were not reflected in their work.⁵ In any case, the Septuagint provides invaluable material showing how the Hebrew Bible was used in this crucial period of Jewish history.

The Septuagint in the Christian Church

The Greek OT, not the Hebrew Bible, was the primary theological and literary context within which the writers of the NT and most early Christians worked.⁶ This does not mean that the NT writers were ignorant of the Hebrew Bible or that they did not use it. But since the NT authors were writing in Greek, they would naturally quote, allude to, and otherwise use a Greek version of the Hebrew Bible. This process is no different from that of a modern author writing in Spanish, for instance, and quoting a widely used Spanish translation of the Bible.

Consequently, familiarity with the Greek OT cannot help but enlighten the student of the Greek NT. Biblical scholar Adolf Deissmann once wrote, “A single hour lovingly devoted to the text of the Septuagint will further our exegetical knowledge of the Pauline Epistles more than a whole day spent over a commentary.”⁷ The connection can be illustrated at several levels.

In the first place, the Septuagint provided some of the vocabulary that the NT writers drew upon. To be sure, it is often difficult to determine whether a NT writer used a given Greek word, such as *sabbaton* (“Sabbath”), because of its use in the Septuagint or simply because it was already a part of the vocabulary among Greek-speaking Jews in the first century. There is no doubt, however, that the NT writers often use Septuagint terms or phrases that were not in common Greek usage (e.g., *pasa sarx*, “all flesh,” in Luke 3:6). In such cases, they may be borrowing the terms from the Septuagint to affect a “biblical” style. Most of us have heard someone pray using the archaic English pronouns *thee* and *thou*. Although these pronouns are not current in modern

5. E.g., see Isa. 15:7b, which in the Hebrew reads, “They [i.e., the Moabites] will carry away their possessions over the brook of willows.” The Greek translator, however, misunderstood the text (the Hebrew word for “willows” has the same consonants as the word for “Arabs”) and rendered it, “For I will bring Arabians upon the valley, and they will take it.” Seeligmann (*Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 89 [repr. 234]) suggests that this rendering alludes to the conquest of Transjordan by the Nabateans, an Arab state, in the second century BCE.

6. See Emanuel Tov, “The Septuagint between Judaism and Christianity,” in *Die Septuaginta und das frühe Christentum—The Septuagint and Christian Origins*, ed. Thomas Scott Cauley and Hermann Lichtenberger, WUNT 277 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 3–25.

7. Adolf Deissmann, *The Philology of the Greek Bible* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1908), 12.

English, people still use them on certain occasions if they want to imitate or suggest the style of biblical language as found in the enormously influential King James Version. The Septuagint certainly left its mark in Greek, just as the King James Version has in English.

Second, the NT writers sometimes used expressions found in the Septuagint to draw the reader's mind to specific passages of OT Scripture. Paul, for instance, uses the phrase "every knee shall bow" in Phil. 2:10 to describe the ultimate exaltation of Jesus. This phrase occurs in the Greek text of Isa. 45:22–23, which may be translated as follows:

Turn to me, and you will be saved,
 you from the ends of the earth.
 I am God, and there is no other.
 By myself I swear
 —surely righteousness will come out of my mouth,
 my words will not be thwarted—
 that every knee will bow to me
 and every tongue will confess to God.

Clearly Paul is using vocabulary from the Greek version of Isa. 45:23, not just to sound "biblical," but to bring that passage to mind in order to identify Jesus with God.

Third, the NT writers frequently quote the Greek OT directly—perhaps as many as three hundred times. This accounts for some of the differences readers note when comparing these quotations with the corresponding OT passages. For example, in Heb. 11:21 dying Jacob is said to have worshiped leaning on the top of his *staff*, a reference to the Greek text of Gen. 47:31. In almost all English Bibles, however, Genesis says that Jacob worshiped at the top of his *bed*, which is indeed what the surviving Hebrew manuscripts say. The reason for the discrepancy is that the Hebrew text used by the Greek translator of Genesis consisted only of consonants; the appropriate vowels were to be inferred by the reader from the context. The Hebrew noun *mṯh* in Genesis could be read as either *maṭṭeh* ("staff") or *miṭṭâ* ("bed"), and the Greek translator, possibly following an interpretative tradition, inferred that the word *staff* was meant. Some centuries later, when vowel points were added to the Hebrew biblical texts, the noun in Gen. 47:31 was taken (on the basis of a different tradition) to mean "bed."⁸

8. The NIV translates Gen. 47:31 so as to agree with Heb. 11:21, presumably on the grounds that the traditional vowel pointing of the Hebrew text is incorrect and that the Greek version preserves the correct sense. For a discussion of this quotation, see Moisés Silva, "The New

One must appreciate that the continuity and development of thought between the Old and New Testaments is of particular concern for biblical theology. The Greek OT provides essential, but often overlooked, theological links that would have been familiar to Christians of the first century but are not so obvious in the Hebrew version. No NT scholar can afford to ignore the Septuagint and other Greek versions.

In addition, the Greek, not the Hebrew text, was the Bible used by the early church fathers and councils. As Christian doctrine on the nature of Jesus and the Trinity developed, discussion centered on the exegesis of key OT texts. Because most of the church fathers could not read Hebrew, exegetical debates were settled using the Greek OT. Some of the Greek words used to translate the OT had connotations associated with Greek culture and philosophy that were probably alien to the thought of the original Hebrew author. The simple fact that the Hebrew Scriptures existed in the Greek language and were read by people living in a Greek culture led to exegesis by both Jewish and Christian interpreters (e.g., Philo and Arius, respectively) that was heavily influenced by Greek philosophy.

Of course, one must also consider that the Greek translators themselves originally rendered the Hebrew in ways that were to some extent influenced by Greek culture and thought, making the text even more congenial to a later exegesis that would be similarly influenced. A good example is the Greek text of Prov. 8:22–31, which held a prominent place in the early discussions about the nature of Jesus and his place in the Trinity. In this passage, wisdom is personified as the first of the Lord's works prior to the creation of the universe. Primarily because of the opening verses of John's Gospel, Jesus became associated with this divine wisdom (*sophia*) or rationality (*logos*). In Greek philosophy, however, the Greek concept of an impersonal divine wisdom permeating the universe was prominent, and so the nature of Jesus and his relationship to God the Father had to be carefully delineated. Many early theologians, such as Origen and Tertullian, used Prov. 8 in their discussions of the relationship between the Son and the Father. Subsequently Arius, a Christian presbyter of Alexandria (died 336), argued on the basis of the Greek translation of Prov. 8 that the Son was a created being, not coeternal with the Father. Subtle differences between the Greek and Hebrew worked in favor of Arius's argument, which led to years of intense debate.⁹

Testament Use of the Old Testament: Text Form and Authority," in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. D. A. Carson and J. W. Woodbridge (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 147–65.

9. The Arian teaching was pronounced a heresy by the Council of Nicea in 325. For further details, see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, 5 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971–89), 1:191–210.

Augustine famously made frequent use of Isa. 7:9, “Unless you have believed, you will not understand” (according to the Old Latin), making faith a central component in the quest for knowledge.¹⁰ But this statement is not found in most English Bibles today, which translate the Hebrew text, “If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all” (NIV). Spoken in the original context of Isaiah’s exhortation to King Ahaz, the statement threatens the future of Ahaz’s reign if he seeks security in an alliance with Assyria. As Pope Francis points out in his encyclical letter *Lumen Fidei*,

Here there is a play on words, based on two forms of the verb *’amān*: “you will believe” (*ta’ amînu*) and “you shall be established” (*tē’ amēnu*). . . . It might seem that the Greek version of the Bible, by translating “be established” as “understand,” profoundly altered the meaning of the text by moving away from the biblical notion of trust in God towards a Greek notion of intellectual understanding. Yet this translation, while certainly reflecting a dialogue with Hellenistic culture, is not alien to the underlying spirit of the Hebrew text. The firm foundation that Isaiah promises to the king is indeed grounded in an understanding of God’s activity and the unity which he gives to human life and to the history of his people.¹¹

Augustine, reading most likely from a Latin Bible that had been translated from a Greek text, found there that without faith in God’s enduring presence one cannot attain true understanding.

These examples are only two of many that show how the doctrines and beliefs of Christianity were hammered out with exegetical appeals to an OT that was written in Greek, not Hebrew. While no point of Christian doctrine rests on the Greek text in contradiction to the Hebrew, it is also true that the Greek OT text was the Word of God for the universal church in its first three centuries. Moreover, the Eastern Orthodox churches inherited the Greek text as their Bible. Traditionally, the Orthodox churches have considered the Greek version to be divinely inspired (and even in some sense to have superseded the Hebrew text), although this view is a matter of debate among Orthodox scholars today.¹²

Because of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, most Christians in the Western church today are completely unfamiliar with the

10. Robert J. O’Connell, *Soundings in St. Augustine’s Imagination* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1994), 123–24.

11. Pope Francis, *Lumen Fidei*, Vatican website, June 29, 2013, §23, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20130629_enciclica-lumen-fidei.html (accessed September 2, 2015).

12. See the discussion below in chap. 3 under the heading “The Biblical Canon” and n. 48.

Septuagint. Part of the reason for this development is that the Reformation shifted attention away from the early translations of the OT, whether they be Greek or Latin, back to the original Hebrew. Today's English translations of the OT are rightly based, not on the Greek or Latin versions, but on the best available Hebrew text, known as the MASORETIC TEXT (MT). While the Hebrew is the best textual base for modern translations, we cannot forget that the ancient Greek version of the OT was nevertheless the Bible of the earliest Christian writers.¹³

As we have seen, the Greek versions contain textual links not found in the Hebrew that provide historical and literary continuity for the important task of biblical theology and for accurately understanding the exegetical debates of the early church fathers. The student of the Bible at the college or seminary level must learn to appreciate the Septuagint and to understand its use in modern biblical scholarship and exegesis. Although few students will pursue Septuagint studies as a specialty at the graduate level, all students of the Bible, regardless of their religious identity, should understand the historical importance of the Septuagint and its significant contribution to the development of the Bible that we hold in our hands today. As the eminent biblical scholar Ferdinand Hitzig is said to have remarked to his students, "Gentlemen, have you a Septuagint? If not, sell all you have, and buy a Septuagint."¹⁴

13. Müller goes so far as to argue that the Christian church in the West was quite wrong to follow Jerome's preference for the Hebrew text over that of the Septuagint. See Mogens Müller, *The First Bible of the Church: A Plea for the Septuagint*, JSOTSup 206, Copenhagen International Seminary 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 143. Even more emphatic is Timothy Michael Law, *When God Spoke Greek: The Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). While the arguments of these and other authors are not persuasive, they are helpful in showing the great importance of the Greek text for early Christianity.

14. J. J. Kneucker, "Zur Erinnerung an Ferdinand Hitzig: Eine Lebens- und Charakterskizze," in *Dr. Ferdinand Hitzig's Vorlesungen über Biblische Theologie und Messianische Weissagungen des Alten Testaments*, ed. J. J. Kneucker (Karlsruhe: H. Reuther, 1880), 1–64, esp. 19n2. Apparently Professor Hitzig had no female students. Today, women are among the outstanding scholars contributing to Septuagint studies.